



# JERRY PETROWSKI

## WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Contact: Senator Jerry Petrowski

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(608) 266-2502

### **Sen. Petrowski Bills Aimed at Helping Farmers are Signed into Law**

**Madison, WI...** On Tuesday, four bills authored by State Senator Jerry Petrowski (*R-Marathon*) to help Wisconsin farmers were signed into law. The bills extend the fall harvest exemption, allow the University of Wisconsin-Madison latitude in selling and buying land for the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS), allow local municipalities and counties to permit pumping of liquid manure in their highway right-of-ways, and make various changes to the state's "Implements of Husbandry" (IoH) law.

"Agriculture is a vital part of Wisconsin's economy that provides more than 410,000 jobs," said Sen. Petrowski. "It is important for the state to keep up with the changing needs of this \$88 billion industry to help keep our economy moving in the right direction."

Senate Bill 448 made needed changes to the state's "IoH" law to address various issues related to the permitting of wide agricultural vehicles on highways, lighting and marking requirements, hauling of equipment on trailers, and giving farmers notice of vehicle weights at the point of purchase.

"Since passage of the original "IoH" law, we have continued to work with stakeholders in the agricultural industry, local governments, and the Department of Transportation to ensure the continued success of agriculture, but still achieve balance between the need for increased weight and capacity and the need to maintain public safety and manage impacts on infrastructure," said Sen. Petrowski.

Current law allows certain agricultural vehicles to exceed weight limits, without a permit, by 15 percent between September 1st and December 31st of each year. Commonly referred to as the "fall harvest exemption," it allows farmers to quickly transport larger loads of harvested crops from the field back to the home or storage facilities at the most crucial harvest times. Senate Bill 509 extends the allowance to include August.

"After hearing from many farmers, we realized the current window of the exemption failed to accommodate the earlier harvest of some of Wisconsin's most popular and profitable crops, including peas, beans, and potatoes," said Senator Petrowski. "This bill ensures that they will be able to take advantage of that exemption to harvest and transport their crops in a timely manner."

Under current law, UW-Madison CALS is required to bring any sale or exchange of agricultural land

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P.O. Box 7882 • MADISON, WISCONSIN 53707-7882 • [SEN.PETROWSKI@LEGIS.WISCONSIN.GOV](mailto:SEN.PETROWSKI@LEGIS.WISCONSIN.GOV)  
TELEPHONE: (608) 266-2502

before the State Building Commission for approval. Because of this, agricultural lands that become available for sale may be sold before the university can make it through the approval process with the commission. Senate Bill 571 provides authority to the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents to buy, sell, lease, and exchange agricultural land.

“The UW is an important partner for farmers and this flexibility will help them respond to new opportunities to improve their operations throughout the state,” said Senator Petrowski. “This bill provides narrow flexibility to allow UW College of Agricultural and Life Sciences to react in a timely manner to a rapidly changing agricultural real estate landscape.”

The Implements of Husbandry Study group at the Department of Transportation identified pumping liquid manure from a farm to a field in pipes or large hoses rather than hauling it in trucks as a [best practice](#) as it helps “avoid infrastructure damage and highway operational issues while allowing large application equipment to operate [in the field] as designed and avoiding impacts of seasonal road weight limits.” Senate Bill 390 formalizes the authority of local governments to permit placement of temporary hoses or permanent in-ground pipes at highway right-of-ways for this purpose.

“This bill will lead to monetary savings for both local governments and taxpayers; road damage caused by trucks and other equipment will lessen and farmers will not have to purchase fuel for trucks or other costly equipment,” said Sen. Petrowski. “This is fiscally responsible and offers more authority to local governments to oversee this process and creates greater flexibility regarding when liquid manure can be pumped.”

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